



Government's Partner in
Achieving Results
Mollie Anderson, Director

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Customer Focus is a bi-monthly update for department management teams from the Department of Administrative Services. For more information, please visit our website at <http://das.iowa.gov/>.

Contact the editor at Laura.Riordan@iowa.gov. We encourage your feedback.

Customer Focus

A service update newsletter for valued DAS customers

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2006

Moves & Lease Re-negotiations Reap Big Savings

How do you save nearly \$5 million? Just ask Barbara Bendon, the State Property Manager in DAS.

"The renovation of the Jessie Parker Building and the reconfiguration of space in that building and the Lucas Building allowed the Department of Corrections, the Parole Board, the Department of Elder Affairs and a division of the Department of Public Health to move back to the Capitol Complex," said Bendon.

This means the State no longer has to lease off-campus office space for these agencies, which creates a lease-cost avoidance over the next five years of \$3,742,000.

Another approximately \$1 million will be saved over the next five years due to the re-negotiated leases of 10 off-campus spaces, nine of which were expiring. These leases represent just over 91,000 square feet of space, and two of them are for 10-year terms so their savings (about \$200,000) will be realized over the next decade. The significant savings for the new lease terms were achieved due to starting negotiations earlier and grouping multiple leases together to utilize economies of scale, versus negotiating one lease at a time.

The Capitol Complex is now at nearly 100% capacity, with the return of the Department of Corrections, the Parole Board, Elder Affairs and the DPH division. The new office building in the works, which is slated to be approximately 350,000 square feet, will not only replace the Wallace Building but will also allow for the move of more state agencies back to the Capitol Complex, further reducing the expense of off-campus leases. The legisla-

ture has also approved funding to build a "green" facility to house the Iowa Utilities Board and the Office of Consumer Advocate, which will move those two agencies on to the Complex. The construction of both buildings is subject to achieving an annual Return on Investment (ROI) of 5% or more.

In addition to the efforts of the DAS-GSE Space Management team, Bendon credits the hard work of the ICN, Iowa Prison Industries, DAS-Information Technology Enterprise (ITE), and GSE electricians, construction, custodial and locksmith staff for making the moves back to the Capitol Complex a success.

Reverse Auction



On Tuesday, September 26, the State of Iowa conducted its first reverse auction, with excellent results. The auction was for paper products (paper towels, toilet paper, napkins, facial tissues, etc.).

The preliminary savings analysis shows that on a \$700,000 spend, the State achieved \$130,000 in savings (19%). This is on the

(Continued on page 2)

DAS-GSE Offers Rate Reductions for FY07

The Department of Administrative Services is pleased to announce that on Friday, October 20, 2006, the General Services Enterprise (GSE) Customer Council approved reductions in four utility fees: Purchasing, Capitol Complex Maintenance — Ankeny Labs Association Fee, Fleet Management, and Mail Services.

The price reduction will begin with the November bill and continue through the end of Fiscal Year 2007.

For the balance of Fiscal Year 2007, Purchasing fees will be reduced by 30 percent; Capitol Complex Maintenance — Ankeny Labs Association fee will be reduced by 6 percent; Fleet Management fees will be reduced by 10.4 percent, and Mail Services fees will be reduced by 14.8 percent.

In addition to the rate reductions for those four utilities, DAS is also happy to roll out additional marketplace rate reductions. Motor Pool mileage rates will be reduced by \$.06/mile (17 percent reduction) for a savings of \$170,000 for FY07. Leased space savings (over the course of the lease term) will result in a savings for affected agencies of nearly \$5 million. *(See story on page 1 for more details.)*

These rate reductions for FY07 come on top of the savings we were able to achieve for our customers in FY06. Purchasing saw \$300,000 saved in FY06; the Capitol Complex Maintenance — Ankeny Surcharge had a 37.6 percent reduction (\$60,000); Mail Services had a 26.2 percent cut with a reduction value of \$100,000; and the Self-Insurance (Risk) Fund was able to pass on

\$235,000 in savings at the end of FY06.

These rate reductions are an example of the results possible through the strong leadership and close review provided by the Customer Council and the hard work of DAS staff to control cost. We are pleased to report this good news and look forward to continuing our cooperative, entrepreneurial spirit that has brought about savings and efficiencies in state government.

If you have questions regarding billing issues related to these rate reductions, please feel free to contact Lana Morrissey, DAS CFO, at 515-281-6703 or via e-mail at Lana.Morrissey@iowa.gov. For questions specific to this action taken, please contact Paul Carlson, DAS-GSE COO, at 515-281-3101 or via e-mail at Paul.Carlson@iowa.gov.

Reverse Auction, cont.

(Continued from page 1)

high side of the generally expected savings for reverse auctions. Some of the background provides even more compelling evidence of the value of reverse auctions.

Before the State decided to conduct a reverse auction, the current supplier asked to renew the contract -- with an 8% increase in the total cost. Later, the supplier participated in the reverse auction -- and ended up submitting a bid that was 16% lower than the previous contract.

The State's target was to achieve savings similar to those obtained by the Board of Regents on a similar contract, which was about 5% better than the State. This target was surpassed in the first 15 minutes of the auction. Of the nine vendors that placed bids, seven vendors exceeded the targeted savings percentage.

The auction's nine bidders were all based in Iowa. One of the arguments against electronic bidding is

that it reduces opportunities for local bidders. All local bidders were familiar with the reverse auction concept and had participated in an Internet auction.

The auction was scheduled to last 30 minutes, but actually took 2 hours 20 minutes, because there was a provision that any bid in the last two minutes allowed for a three-minute extension. As can be seen, there were a lot of vendors sharpening their pencils and improving their bids at the end! All told, 655 bids were placed.

In conclusion, we view the event as an outstanding success. Attendees provided very favorable comments about the process and many requested that DAS look for other commodities where the process could be used to provide additional savings. DAS will work with our strategic sourcing partner, AT Kearney, to identify other opportunities for savings during Phase II of our Stra-

tegic Sourcing Initiative. DAS wants to thank agencies in advance for working with us on our next phase as we look for innovative ways to save money.

Departments were recently e-mailed information about contracts that departments can utilize to save money. The handout included contract information, contract numbers and helpful hints on saving money. To maximize savings opportunities, make absolutely certain that your departments purchase commodities and services from the negotiated Strategic Sourcing Initiative contracts currently in place. The use of any other contract is highly discouraged and detrimental to our enterprise approach to saving money.

If you have any questions about the Strategic Sourcing Initiative, state contracts, or the reverse auction, please contact Debbie O'Leary at 515-281-8384 or Debbie.Oleary@iowa.gov.

New Name, Same Great Service

DAS-GSE has recently updated some division and building names to reflect expanded responsibilities and services offered. Please note:

Design & Construction is now **Architectural & Engineering Services** and is located in the **Facilities Management Center**, 109 SE 13th Street (formerly the "CCM/Maintenance Building").

Dean Ibsen, who has served as the Administrator of the former Design & Construction division, will now focus his attention on the two new state office buildings the Legislature has provided funding for.

Craig Deichmann will now oversee A&E operations. Craig can be reached at 515-242-6389 or Craig.Deichmann@iowa.gov.

DAS-HRE Introduces Benefits Education

The DAS-HRE Risk and Benefits Management Team is pleased to announce a new service, **Benefits Education**, to assist employees in understanding both their benefits and the value of those benefits. Presentations on deferred compensation are offered on a regular basis. Health and welfare benefits presentations will now also take place on a regular basis. Many employees do not know details of their coverage or are not aware of the cost and value of their benefits. We hope that by offering these presentations employees will become more knowledgeable about their benefits and become better consumers of health and dental care services.

Jim Pierson, a new member to HRE, is available to travel to your location to present information on health and welfare benefits. To "kick-off" this new service, a presentation on the 2007 benefit package is now available. This presentation coincides with the 2007 enrollment and change period that began Friday, October 13, 2006, and ends November 13. Jim has extensive experience in the employee benefits field and will be a great resource to your employees.

Contact Jim at 515-281-5509 or e-mail him at Jim.Pierson@iowa.gov, if you are interested in having him make one or more presentations on the 2007 benefit package at your location. He will make every effort to accommodate your request. Time and resources are limited, so please be flexible. We ask that when you make a request for presentations in Des Moines, at least 10 employees will attend. For presentations outside of the Des Moines area, we ask that at least 15 – 20 employees will attend. The cost of this service is funded through utility fees; there is no additional cost to agencies for these presentations.

Additional presentations will be developed in the future. E-mail Jim with topics you would like presented.

We're pleased to offer this new service. Benefit Education is just one more tool in communicating the value of benefits and the total compensation offered to employees.

Flexible Spending Account Enrollment

The State's flexible spending account program allows you to save money while paying for eligible health and dependent care expenses. If you routinely have health costs that are not covered by insurance, or have children under the age of 13 who require care in order for you to work, you may be able to save money by participating in the program. For program information, see your personnel assistant or visit our web at [http://das.hre.iowa.gov/](http://das.hre.iowa.gov/benefits_flex_spending.html)

[benefits_flex_spending.html](http://das.hre.iowa.gov/benefits_flex_spending.html).

The deadline to enroll in the State's flexible spending account program for 2007 is November 13, 2006. **If you do not enroll by that date, you will not be able to participate in the program in 2007.** If you are a current participant, you may enroll with a paper form or enroll online. If you are a new participant, you must use a paper enrollment form. Paper forms must be received by your personnel assistant no later than November 13, 2006. If

you are mailing your form, please allow 5 mail days to ensure that your form reaches your personnel assistant by November 13.

If you wish to enroll online, you must complete your enrollment by November 13 at 11:59 p.m. Central Time. The website is www.asiflex.com/ia. Please save the confirmation notice, as that is your documentation of your completed enrollment. Current participants will receive more information about online enrollment from ASI.

IowaBenefits Online Enrollment System

With the 2006 enrollment and change period (Oct. 13 — Nov. 13), DAS-HRE introduced *IowaBenefits*, an online, web-based benefits enrollment system (<http://www.das.hre.iowa.gov/iowabenefits.htm>). Employees who want to enroll in any Wellmark health plan can now do so online. Employees who are currently enrolled in a Wellmark health plan should use *IowaBenefits* to make changes to their health enrollment.

Changes that you can make online using *IowaBenefits* include:

- move from or to single or family coverage with a qualifying event;
- add a qualifying family member to a plan;
- remove a family member from a plan;
- inform Wellmark of address and phone number changes.

With *IowaBenefits* you no longer

have to complete a paper form for most changes. You also have the ability to print an individualized summary of your health and dental benefit elections.

If employees are already enrolled in a Wellmark plan and are not making changes to their 2007 plan they do **not** need to log in and accept their benefits. However, all employees are encouraged to log in and verify address, dependents, etc.

The HRE Benefits team has already heard many positive comments from employees who have used *IowaBenefits*, such as: "Easy to use!" ... "It was simple to change my primary care provider" ... "Great!"

It's never been easier to enroll in your health insurance benefits!

REMINDER!
The 2006 benefits enrollment and change period is
October 13 —November 13.

2007 Deferred Compensation Contribution Limits

On October 18, 2006, the IRS announced the annual contribution limits for the State's deferred compensation program, called the Retirement Investors' Club (RIC). Participants wishing to increase their contributions for the first check in January must complete and submit a RIC Account Form by December 15, 2006. The form may be obtained from personnel assistants or RIC's website at http://das.hre.iowa.gov/benefits_ric_forms.html.

Regular Limit	50+ Catch-Up ² Limit	3-Year Catch-Up ³ Limit
The lesser of 100% of compensation ¹ or:	For participants age 50 or older, the regular limit is increased to:	For eligible participants, the total of the regular limit plus amount of missed contributions up to:
\$15,500	\$20,500	\$31,000

¹ Compensation is your gross salary minus FICA. The maximum amount you may contribute may also be reduced by retirement (IPERS, POR, Judicial) deductions, insurances, flexible spending accounts, auto use maintenance, employee organizations, and assignments.

² Participants are not able to use the 50+ Catch Up limits and the 3-Year Catch-Up limits at the same time.

³ If you are within three years of your normal retirement date, you may qualify to contribute more than the regular maximum under the program's 3-Year Catch-up Provision.

SecureOnline.iowa.gov

The DAS Information Security Office is pleased to announce a new public security awareness website, www.secureonline.iowa.gov.

This website is being provided to Iowa citizens and families, as well as state and local government organizations, to assist them with cyber security awareness and education. It contains valuable cyber security information, such as the tips listed below, as well as useful links to other organizations. Please feel free to share this website with your families and friends, as it is intended to be a resource for all Iowa citizens.

Top Ten Cyber Security Tips

1. Use and regularly update firewalls, anti-virus and anti-spyware programs.
2. Properly set up and patch operating systems, browsers and other software programs.
3. Use passwords and authentication methods effectively.
4. Lock your workstation/laptop when you leave it and configure it to automatically lock after a short period of inactivity.
5. Back-up important files regularly.
6. Be cautious when using the Internet.
7. Be aware of messaging security — e-mail and instant messaging.
8. Review your computer security.
9. Learn how to respond to a cyber attack.
10. Remember that cyber security is everyone's responsibility.

For more information about cyber security visit:

www.secureonline.iowa.gov.

Protecting Portable Devices: Physical Security

*Information provided by the
Information Security Office*

Many computer users, especially those who travel for business, rely on laptops, PDAs, and BlackBerries because they are small and easily transported. But while these characteristics make them popular and convenient, they also make them an ideal target for thieves. Make sure to secure your portable devices to protect both the machine and the information it contains.

What is at risk?

If a thief steals your laptop or PDA, the most obvious loss is the machine itself. However, if the thief is able to access the information on the computer, all of the information stored on the device is at risk, as well as any additional information that could be accessed as a result of the data stored on the device itself. The data are often far more valuable than the portable device itself.

You've probably heard news stories about organizations thrown into disarray because laptops with confidential information on them have been lost or stolen. Even if there isn't any sensitive citizen or state information on your laptop or PDA, think of the other information that could be at risk: appointments, passwords, e-mail addresses and other contact information, personal information for online accounts, etc.

Below are tips to help you secure and protect your laptop or other portable device.

Steps to take before you leave the office:

- **Password-protect your computer** - Make sure that you have to enter a strong password to log in to your computer.
- **Be sure all critical information is backed up** – Portable computers should not be the only place important information is stored.
- **Remove information that is not needed** – Don't carry around files that are not necessary to your work.
- **Store your laptop securely at the office** - When not in use, store portable devices out of sight and, whenever possible, in a locked drawer or file cabinet.

Steps to take when traveling:

- **When traveling by car** - If it is necessary to leave a laptop in a car, lock it in the trunk or other location where it is out of sight. Never leave electronic devices in cars for extended periods during either very hot or very cold weather. Never leave the vehicle unlocked when unattended, even for a minute. Do not leave the computer in the vehicle overnight.
- **When traveling by air** - Never check-in your portable device and always keep it as a carry-on. Watch your laptop carefully as it goes through the airport screening process – this is an opportune time for a thief to take it. Make sure you have your portable device with you each time you board or deplane. Keep the device in a closed bag or briefcase and keep in physical contact with the bag at all times.
- **In the hotel room** - Keep the portable device out of sight when you leave the room. If a room safe is available, lock the device with other valuables in the safe. Do not share your room number with anyone you don't know.
- **At conferences and trade shows** - Be especially wary at conferences, large meetings and trade shows. These are common venues for thieves, because of the many devices available to steal, the common distractions for attendees (e.g. conversations and food tables) and the ease of disappearing into the crowd in seconds.
- **Downplay your laptop or PDA** - There is no need to advertise to thieves that you have a laptop or PDA. Avoid using your portable device in public areas, and consider non-traditional bags for carrying your laptop.

Steps to take at home.

- **Keep the laptop or other device out of sight when not in use** - If it is not in plain sight, a thief may not find it.
- **Treat it as if it were cash** - Think of a laptop as \$1,500 in cash and protect it accordingly.

What should you do if your laptop or other portable device is lost or stolen?

Report the loss or theft to the appropriate authorities as soon as possible. These parties may include representatives from the following:

- Local law enforcement agencies
- Hotel or conference staff
- Airport or other transportation security offices
- The DAS Service Desk (515-281-5703 or 800-532-1174 toll free). The service desk will inform the appropriate parties to shut down any services that may be at risk.

Be Careful Up There

Information provided by Cindy Houlson, the new Employee Safety Program Coordinator in the Department of Administrative Services. Cindy can be reached at 515-281-0181 or Cynthia.Houlson@iowa.gov.

Fall is in the air. Many of us are racing against the fall rains or early snow, trying to finish up outside chores. Cleaning gutters, removing leaves from roof tops, trimming trees and caulking windows may require the use of a ladder.

When you're in a hurry to reach a high place, it's tempting to climb on a chair, table or anything handy to get there. But is it worth the risk? It is estimated that this year more than 30,000 people will be disabled by falls involving ladders or ladder substitutes. The good news is that ladder accidents are preventable just by taking a few minutes to review four basic safety rules for ladders.

1. Choose the Right Ladder for the Job

- Read the duty rating. (Type I holds 250 pounds; type II holds up to 225 pounds; type III holds up to 200 pounds) Do Not exceed the duty rating.
- Remember to include the weight of the tools or materials you plan to use.
- Do Not use a metal ladder around electrical wires; use a dry wooden or nonconductive fiberglass ladder for this kind of work.

2. Inspect the Ladder Before You Use It

- Check that the spreaders can be locked in place when open.
- Be sure straight ladders have safety feet (metal ladders should have rubber or plastic feet as well as step coverings).
- Be certain the ladder's steps are wide enough to spread your feet for balance.
- Check for loose or bent rungs.
- Look for cracked side rails on wooden or plastic ladders and bent parts on metal ladders.
- Replace any missing parts and tighten loose hardware.
- Do not try to repair major structural damage; instead, invest in a new ladder.

3. Set Up Your Ladder Carefully

- Place your ladder on a firm, level surface with its feet parallel to the wall it rests on.
- Use a barricade to prevent collisions if ladder is in busy area.
- Lock any nearby doors that opens toward you, especially automatic garage doors.
- Use the four-to-one ladder rule: set the base of ladder one foot away from the wall for every four feet of ladder height.

4. Climb Cautiously

- Face the ladder when climbing up or down.
- Hold the side rails with both hands.
- Carry only necessary tools on your belt; use a rope to raise heavier equipment.
- Tie the ladder securely if you use power equipment.
- Use the "belt buckle" rule; always keep your belt buckle centered between the rails.
- Allow only one person on a ladder at a time.
- Wear shoes with nonskid soles and make sure shoes and hands are clean and dry.
- Never use the top two rungs of a ladder.
- Tie off the ladder or have someone support the base.

By following these four basic rules you can reach new heights in safety!

News in Brief

Public Vehicle Auction

Fleet will hold its fourth vehicle auction for 2006 on Saturday, November 18. About 105 vehicles will be sold. Prospective buyers may examine, start engines, and operate accessories on auction vehicles only from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. on Friday, November 17, 2006, and from 7:30 to 8:45 a.m. on Saturday, November 18, 2006, in the northwest corner of State Parking Lot 16, bordered by E. 13th and Des Moines Streets. The auction will begin promptly at 9 a.m.

For more information: http://das.gse.iowa.gov/projects_products/AuctionBefore2.html.

Custodial Supervisors

The Custodial Supervisors for the Capitol Building and the Ankeny Lab Facilities have switched places! Linda Long is the new supervisor for Ankeny, and Bill Gartner will now be seen around the

Capitol Complex.

Proposed Postage Rate Increase

The United States Postal Service is requesting authority to raise the price of a first-class stamp to 42 cents. For additional information go to www.usps.com/ratecase. Please consider this possible increase and its effect on your budget.

Customer Surveys

To keep us on-track as an entrepreneurial, customer-focused organization, DAS is required to conduct quarterly surveys of our customers. Results from the 1st Quarter of FY2007 (July-September 2006) survey are now posted on the [DAS home page](#). Thank you to all those who take time to provide us with valuable feedback.

Electricity Costs

Did you know that MidAmerican Energy's current rate agreement with the Iowa

Utilities Board keeps electric rates stable through 2010? That's good news for Iowa business, including government agencies.

In the Works: Web-Based Parcel Processing

The DAS Mail Center has established a pilot group to work on a new United Parcel Service (UPS) web-based system. This pilot group is comprised of the four largest-mail-volume agencies on the Complex: Natural Resources, Public Health, Revenue and Agriculture. They are currently evaluating the UPS system for ease of use and to ensure that current system addresses can be imported.

We are pleased to announce that the web-based system will offer customers expanded capabilities to track packages, little to no downtime, and the possibility for statewide customer access.

The target date for implementation of the UPS web-based system is December 1, 2006.



Taking a proactive approach to learning new skills can help you avoid the time consuming, reactive approach you may be forced to take when projects or processes require change or improvement. The Certified Public Manager (CPM) program is an opportunity for leaders in federal, state, county, and local government organizations to demonstrate their commitment to serving the citizens of Iowa through best-practice management and leadership strategies.



CPM creates an invaluable network for Iowa's leaders to learn from each other through the exchange of knowledge and ideas. CPM continues to prove itself as a unique, advantageous program for government employees and their organizations.

PDS will be launching its seventh CPM cohort on January 9, 2007. The eighth cohort will begin on June 12, 2007. Departments are encouraged to select two or three individuals to participate in the upcoming 2007 CPM programs.

Please visit the CPM website, <http://das.hre.iowa.gov/cpm.htm>, for more information about the program and application instructions. You may also contact Cindy Axne 515-281-6383 or Leslie Davenport 515-281-5456.

Meeting Dates to Remember

Customer Councils

General Services

November 17 meeting cancelled

Friday, December 8, 9-11 a.m.

Hoover Level A, Conf. Rm. 7

Human Resources

Wednesday, Dec. 6, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 3, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Hoover Bldg, Level A, Conf. Rm. 5

I/3

November meeting cancelled

Thursday, Dec. 14, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Hoover Lvl B, Conf. Rms 2&3

Technology

Tuesday, November 14, 1-3 p.m.

Hoover Bldg, Level B, Conf. Rm. 2

Tuesday, December 12, 1-3 p.m.

Hoover Bldg, Level A, Conf. Rm. 7

For Customer Council

information:

http://das.iowa.gov/customer_councils/index.html or contact [Laura Riordan](#)

at 515-242-5038.



Technology Governance Board

Thursday, Nov. 9, 3-5 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 14, 3-5 p.m.

Hoover Bldg, 4th Floor Conf Rm

Vertical Infrastructure Committee

Thursday, Nov. 9, 10 a.m. — 2 p.m.

Glenwood Resource Center, Glenwood

Thursday, Dec. 14, 10 a.m.—2 p.m.

Location TBA

Capitol Planning Commission

No November or December meeting

scheduled

Hosting the World Food Prize Laureate Award Ceremony

How do you prepare to host 700 people for dinner and an awards ceremony? A lot of planning, coordination and teamwork. On Thursday, October 19, 2006, the 20th annual World Food Prize Laureate Award Ceremony was held at the Iowa State Capitol Building, where it has taken place since 2000. The Laureate Award Ceremony is part of the larger World Food Prize Symposium held every year to honor one or more individuals who have made significant contributions in the advancement of food and agriculture. Often referred to as the "Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture," the World Food Prize attracts international attention and, this year, representation from more than 60 countries.



DAS staff was faced with the immense job of preparing for this event, including:

- Extra cleaning and dusting in the Capitol Building by the custodial team — especially with the construction going on, a lot of extra dusting was necessary to get the building in tip-top shape.
- Providing engineering and electrical support — everything from changing light bulbs to helping IPTV set up to broadcast the event.
- Fire watch — the large globe used (seen in the photo above) required that the fire alarm system be put on bypass and staff members stand-by on fire watch.
- In addition, the grounds crew made sure our Capitol Complex grounds looked spectacular for our honored guests.
- General Services (GSE) staff also had to move all of the chairs out of the House Chambers to make way for the ceremony.

Our thanks to everyone who devoted extra time and effort for this event. We hope everyone enjoyed this special day on the Capitol Complex.

